Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EB/IFD/BP:T A SCHLENKER:VJW APPROVED BY EB/IFD/BP:H J WINTER L/EB - C E ROH EA/J - H COCHRAN JUSTICE - H HALE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, JA, US

SUBJECT: INVESTIGATION OF U.S. AND JAPANESE MACHINE TOOL INDUSTRY

REF: STATE 159568

- 1. AS MENTIONED IN REFTEL, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) HAS BEEN CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER NATIONAL MACHINE TOOL BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (NMTBA) HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN COMBINATION OR CONSPIRACY IN RESTRAINT OF TRADE IN VIOLATION OF THE SHERMAN ACT. DOJ INVESTIGATION ALSO INVOLVES NMTBA'S COUNTERPART IN JAPAN, JAPAN MACHINE TOOL BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (JMTBA).
- 2. THUS FAR, FOCUS OF INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN ON DOMESTIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSOCIATION ONLY. DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM NMTBA PURSUANT TO CIVIL INVESTIGATIVE DEMANDS. ORAL DEPOSITIONS OF OFFICIALS OF NMTBA ARE CONTEMPLATED IN NEAR FUTURE.

3. JUSTICE SUSPECTS THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN MEETINGS WITH JAPANESE PRODUCERS RELATING TO VOLUME OF JAPANESE IMPORTS INTO U.S., AS WELL AS ALLEGATIONS OF DUMPING.

PRESIDENT OF NMTBA SUBSEQUENTLY MADE A SPEECH WHICH WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN THE PRESS -- INCLUDING JAPANESE PRESS -- EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT JAPANESE IMPORTS AND ACCUSING JAPANESE INDUSTRY OF DUMPING. ACCORDING TO NEWSPAPER REPORTS, WITHIN A MONTH JAPANESE INDUSTRY FORMED AN EXPORT CARTEL BECAUSE OF "COMPLAINTS" FROM PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN NMTBA.

- 4. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO NOTIFY SECOND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION SECTION OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABOUT COMMENCEMENT OF THIS INVESTIGATION AND POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OF ITS NATIONAL PURSUANT TO 1967 OECD NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES.
- 5. FOR EMBASSY BACKGROUND ONLY: POSSIBLE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN JUSTICE AND GOJ MENTIONED REFTEL WILL BE ARRANGED SEPARATELY OUTSIDE OECD FRAMEWORK. CHRISTOPHER

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Concepts: MACHINE TOOL INDUSTRY, ANTITRUST, INVESTIGATIONS

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